MASTER OF ARTS IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Three-Year Coursework Degree
Programme Code: 90119

INFORMATION BROCHURE
2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking an interest in our Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology Programme at the University of South Africa. Our programme is comprehensive and runs over a three-year full-time period. It is a professional, selections-based degree that leads to registration with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) as a Clinical Psychologist (under the auspices of the HPCSA, provided that you adhere to all the requirements of both the academic institution (Unisa) and the HPCSA, including that you pass and successfully complete the MA (Clinical Psychology) degree, a 12-month internship at an accredited institution, the HPCSA board exam and a 12-month community service).

The programme is comprehensive, and rigorous, and requires students who are selected to be dedicated, hard-working, and committed to being trained as Clinical Psychologists. In addition to the academic requirements of the programme, there is a strong emphasis on both personal and professional development, and students can be asked to leave the programme at any time, due to unprofessional and/or unethical behaviour, lack of professional development and conduct.

2 . ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admission to apply for the Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology Programme is open to candidates in possession of an Honours degree in Psychology or an accredited Bachelor of Psychology (BPsych) degree, with a minimum of 60% average. International students must meet the English language requirement. The candidate must have obtained a minimum of **60%** average for their honours in psychology / BPsych Degree to be eligible to apply. The programme is competitive, and we have many applicants each year, so only those applicants with a minimum of 60% average will be considered. According to the HPCSA, **candidates with a criminal record, or criminal charges against them, are not eligible to apply, and therefore cannot be admitted into the programme**. You will be required to submit a police clearance certificate, from the South African Police Services (SAPS), with your application (**no** third-party certificates will be accepted). **If admitted into the programme, you should live within easy reach of the main campus in Muckleneuk, Pretoria (Gauteng), for the duration of the course as the degree is offered on full-time basis**. In other words, students are required to be

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

available for training purposes, five days a week, Monday to Friday from 08h00-until the close of the working day. While some theoretical modules may have some lectures online, all theory, practical work and clinic work and the majority of the training are conducted in person, on campus, or in the surrounding areas. Therefore, if selected, applicants should be prepared to relocate.

3. APPLICATIONS

Applications for the MA Clinical Psychology Masters Programme open on the 2nd of May 2026, 08h00am, and close promptly on the 22nd of May 2026, at 16h00pm. Please apply online and ensure you submit **all** the necessary documentation (you will be informed of what documents to submit in the online application forms). No hard-copy applications will be accepted. In addition, incomplete or late applications will **not** be considered.
You can access the online application on the following link:
https://unisair.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_268UMh7ON7MHeui[1]

As part of the online application process, you are required to select two referees, who will be required to complete referee forms. The referees you select should be known to you in an academic or professional capacity, who can comment on certain aspects of your skill set and characteristics. Referees should not be a personal acquittance, family members or friends.
https://unisair.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0cdq5qglxk4HqVU[1]

Please note: NO late or incomplete application forms will be accepted. It is also your responsibility to ensure that the referees you have selected submit their referee forms on time (**22nd of May 2026 at 16h00pm at the latest**). Incomplete or late referee forms will not be considered, and thus your application will not be considered.

4. SELECTION

Students who are interested in applying for the course must complete the online application form first and ensure that all the relevant documentation is submitted on time. Instructions will be provided on the online application form, and you will be guided through the online application process and the submission of supporting documents. Remember, incomplete applications will **not** be considered. **Please do not wait until the last minute to submit your applications, as we cannot allow any applications beyond the closing date**. Also, **please make sure you do not submit more than one application**. All duplicates will be deleted.

The selection interviews will be conducted face-to-face in 2026 at Unisa Muckleneuck Campus in Pretoria, however, if necessary, selections may be conducted online (should this be the case, you will be informed accordingly). Internet access for online selections is the responsibility of applicants. Applicants will be informed of any changes and the logistics of selection week if invited for interviews (if invited for selections, you will be notified by email approximately 2 weeks before the interviews). Selections will be conducted during the week of the **29th of June – 2nd of July 2026**. Due to the intensive nature of the course, only a limited number of applicants are selected annually

[1] These links will only be available between 2nd -22nd May 2026

(**approximately 10 annually**).

Understandably, the selection process can be stressful and challenging, however, to ensure a fair process, the selection procedures are rigorous. This section outlines the selection procedures transparently.

The **first round** of selections entails a thorough review of your application forms by members of the selection and training team. This is our first introduction to you as potential applicants, so keep this in mind when you complete the application form. Applicants who are shortlisted from their online application forms will be invited for the **second round** of selection interviews to be held at the Unisa main campus in Muckleneuk, Pretoria, Gauteng (or online). Being shortlisted at this stage does not imply, nor guarantee a successful application. The initial group invited to round two will be split into two smaller groups, each group will then be interviewed either on Monday or Tuesday of the selection week (not both days). Applicants will be informed as to the relevant day that they should be present for the second round of the selection process, if they have been shortlisted. Being shortlisted at this stage does not imply, nor guarantee a successful application. If successful, applicants from both groups (Monday and Tuesday groups) will then be invited back to attend **round three** of the selections, which will be held on Wednesday. Being shortlisted at this stage does not imply, nor guarantee a successful application. Only those applicants who are short-listed on Wednesday will be invited back for the **fourth round** of selections, to be held on Thursday. The selection process will be in Pretoria, and so applicants therefore need to make themselves available for the entire week should they be invited for the follow-up rounds. We will continue the selection process until a final decision has been made as to the successful applicants. Should you be short-listed at any time, you will be informed in writing, via email. The selection tasks conducted on campus range from group interviews, group activities, written tasks and individual interviews. These are at the discretion of the selection and training team. Remember, being shortlisted on any given day does not imply, nor guarantee a successful application. As a reminder, applicants who are selected for interviews will be informed closer to the time regarding whether the interviews will be conducted in person on campus, or online.

Due to the significantly large number of applicants who apply, you are not guaranteed a place in the programme even if you meet the minimum requirements. Our selection process involves scrutiny of the application forms, your academic record, and the referee letters, and evaluation of the potential candidate's performance in the selection interviews. In addition, we ensure that we adhere to policies of transformation and diversity in selecting the final successful group of applicants.

Application forms can be accessed online: https://unisair.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_268UMh7ON7MHeui[2]. All applications must be done online, and no hard-copy applications will be accepted.
Referee forms can be accessed online at https://unisair.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0cdq5qglxk4HqVU[2]. All referee forms must be done online, and no hard-copy applications will be accepted.

[2] These link will only be available between 2nd -22nd May 2026

N.B! Applications and referee forms must reach the University by no later than 16h00pm on the 22nd of May 2026. Late applications will **not** be considered. Also note that it is your responsibility to ensure that the referee forms have been submitted. An incomplete application will not be considered.

NOTE: as part of the application process, we do require a recent (no older than 6 months) police clearance certificate from SAPS (no third-party certificates will be accepted). We know that this process can take time, so we encourage you to apply for your police clearance in the meantime. Police clearance certificates should be no older than six (6 months).

4.1 THE COURSE

The curriculum covers theoretical, practical and research training, and extends over three full-time academic years, **including internship**. All modules must be successfully completed and passed, with a minimum of 50% to obtain the degree. A breakdown of the modules included in the programme is detailed in the table below:

Year	Module Code	Module Name
Year 1	PYC5901	Ethics, Legislation and Professional Psychological Practice
	PYC5902	Ecosystemic Theories
	PYC5903	Psychopathology and Psychodiagnostics
	PYC5904	Psychological Assessment
	PYC5905	Child and Adult Therapeutic Skills and Strategies
	PYC5911	Community Mental Health Care Practice
	MPCHS91	Research Proposal
Year 2	PYC5906	Psychological and Psycho-legal Assessment
	PYC5907	Neuropsychology and Neuropsychological Assessment
	PYC5908	African Epistemologies
	PYC5909	Family Therapy: Theory and Practice
	PYC5912	Psycho-Legal Intervention and Practice
	PYC5913	Clinical Psychotherapeutic Practice
	PYC5914	Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy
	DLCPS91	Dissertation of limited scope
Year 3	PYC5915	Clinical Psychology Internship
	DLCPS91	Dissertation of limited scope

We recognise your previous learning and rely on the knowledge you gained in your undergraduate and honours degrees. Each module must be passed with a minimum of 50% to progress to the following year. This means that you must pass all year 1 modules, to progress to year 2, and you must pass all year 2 modules, to progress to year 3. **Students may be excluded from the programme at any time on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic progress, unethical behaviour, and/or behaviour considered to be inappropriate or unprofessional for professional psychology**

practice (regardless of academic performance).

Due to the demands of the course, successful applicants are not permitted to do any other full-time or part-time work during the 3 years of the programme. In addition, you are responsible for funding your studies. This means that you need sufficient financial resources for the academic fees, prescribed books and academic requirements, and items such as rent, household expenses, groceries, daily travel to Unisa for classes, practical work, and weekly clinics, study registration, computer equipment, internet access and printing, etc. Unisa bursaries are only available in the second year of study, but only if you have passed the first year of the course, as well as the proposal module (MPCHS91) successfully. Access to a bursary is not guaranteed and is at the discretion of the university, and you should thus plan accordingly.

THEORY

The theoretical aspects of the programme are covered in weekly lectures, seminars and workshops, and include (but are not limited to):

- Ecosystemic Psychology
- Psychotherapy (child, individual, group and family psychotherapy according to the systemic and other theoretical models)
- Psychological Assessment (test administration, scoring, interpretation and report writing with regards to various psychological instruments for example: intelligence measurements and personality assessment)
- Psychopathology and Psychodiagnostics (diagnosis according to the DSM-5-TR classification system and the ICD-10/11 classification system, as well as explanations of psychopathology according to various perspectives).
- Neuropsychology (introduction to neuropsychology and neuropsychological assessment and report writing)
- African Epistemology (integration of African perspectives to psychology and health/pathology, research, and community, etc.)
- Psycho-legal Psychology
- Community Psychology (assessment of and interventions in community and transcultural contexts)
- Family Therapy
- Group Psychotherapy
- Research (various research designs and methods)
- Ethics and professional psychological practices (rules and procedures according to Health Professions Council of South Africa).

PRACTICAL

This includes the application of all the theoretical aspects covered in 4.1 in various contexts, such as:

- Unisa Psychotherapy Clinic
- Community-based practical sites in and around Pretoria/Johannesburg
- Psychiatric and Psycho-legal practical sites
- Clinic and case management
- Liaison with referral agents and other related professionals
- Training in report writing

- Group dynamics through experiential group processes

All practical work is done under strict supervision by the course trainers.

RESEARCH

- Weekly research seminars focusing on the theoretical and practical aspects of research are conducted during your first year of training
- In addition, first-year clinical students will be required to present their research proposal defenses; and second-year clinical students will be required to present their research to a panel of trainers and members of the department
- A dissertation of limited scope is planned and executed in collaboration with a supervisor. Completion of the degree depends on passing the dissertation, and all modules with a minimum of 50% each.

5. PRESENTATION OF THE COURSE

5.1 THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL TRAINING

It is assumed that students are well acquainted with basic theoretical knowledge because of their undergraduate and honours studies. Weekly lectures, theoretical seminars and workshops take place during the first and second years of the programme. The practical work consists of weekly workshops and regular supervised practice in assessment and therapeutic skills in various contexts. During workshops, practical demonstrations and application of various theories and techniques take place. Students are required to do weekly supervised practical work. For supervisory and self-evaluating purposes, audio-visual recordings of practical work are required.

5.2 THE DISSERTATION OF LIMITED SCOPE

For the degree to be completed within the prescribed period, the dissertation must be submitted for examination before April of the third year of training. To conform to these requirements, it is essential that a dissertation title as well as the research proposal be approved and officially registered by no later than October of the first year of study. Once your supervisor is satisfied with your proposal, it must undergo a scientific review by the Departmental Higher Degrees Committee (DHDC), and if approved, submitted for ethical clearance to the College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee (CREC) before you can commence with the research dissertation.

5.3 ASSESSMENT

As part of the evaluation process, students will be expected to submit individual and group assignments, portfolios, written assignments and tests, presentations, role plays and other related projects, as well as attend oral examinations twice a year. The course is designed as a continuous assessment programme, which means that students will be evaluated and assessed throughout the year, and all assessments count towards the final mark per module. The candidate's progression and performance are monitored throughout the year. Trainers meet regularly to discuss, evaluate and monitor each candidate's performance and progress. If a student fails a module, you will not be

permitted to progress to the next year of training.

6. EXAMINATION

As per the continuous assessment design of the programme, students are assessed throughout the year, and all assessments contribute to the final mark of each respective module. In the middle and at the end of both academic years, oral and written examinations are conducted. The end-of-year oral examinations are moderated by an external examiner, to ensure that students achieve the necessary competencies to progress to the next year of training, and to ensure that all assessment policies and procedures are adhered to. A student may not enter the second year of study unless all first-year modules are passed with a minimum of 50% each. If a module is failed, you will not be permitted to continue into the second year. Likewise, a student may not enter an internship unless all second-year modules are passed with a minimum of 50% each.

Only after successful completion of (a) all theoretical and practical modules across years 1 and 2, (b) a research dissertation of limited scope, and (c) a 12-month clinical psychology internship, will the relevant MA (Clinical Psychology) degree be conferred.

7. INTERNSHIP

To conform to the HPCSA requirements for professional registration (as a Clinical Psychologist), a candidate must successfully complete a 12-month internship at an accredited training institution. The 12-month internship is part of the MA (Clinical Psychology) degree, and therefore you cannot be awarded your degree if you have not complied with all requirements, including the internship. Please refer to www.hpcsa.co.za for details of accredited internship placement sites. The course and the internship may not be done concurrently, you will be expected to progress through your training sequentially.

8. COMMUNITY SERVICE

After you have been awarded your degree, and have passed the HPCSA board exam, you will be required to serve another 12 months of community service at an approved and supervised site. Please refer to www.hpcsa.co.za for details of accredited community placement sites. Please note that according to the HPCSA rules and regulations, interns must have completed **both** their degree (which implies successful completion of the coursework, research dissertation and the 12-month internship) as well as pass the HPCSA board exam before commencing with the community service year.

8. CONTACT

For more information, please contact the course administrator:

Ms. Charlotte Shoba at shobact@unisa.ac.za or (012) 429-4788; or

Course coordinator(s):

Prof. Daniel Letsoalo (Ph.D.)
Programme Coordinator
Letsodl@unisa.ac.za

Dr. Khumoetsile Modutla (Ph.D.)
Programme Coordinator (secundus)
Moruakm@unisa.ac.za